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LETTER DATED 30 NOVEMBER 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF TAJIKISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I hereby have the honour to transmit the text of a statement issued on 30 November 1997 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Rashid ALIMOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Statement issued on 30 November 1997 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan

As has already been reported, Mr. Franck Janier-Dubry and Ms. Karine Danielle Mane, who were working in Tajikistan for the Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS) Mission and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, respectively, were abducted on 18 November 1997. The Tajik Government and all Tajiks strongly condemned this barbaric terrorist act which was intended to undermine the authority of the Republic of Tajikistan in the eyes of the international community and to intimidate employees of foreign missions accredited in our Republic. It is no secret that those forces, whose interests lie in stirring up tension in Tajikistan and negating the emergent positive social and political trends which have resulted from the focused efforts of a great many people, continue to nurture their insidious plans, and in so doing they do not shrink from using whatever means they deem necessary to achieve their vile ends.

According to the law-enforcement organs, based on a considerable quantity of information received during operational investigative activities, it was concluded that Rizvon Sadirov and his gunmen were directly involved in the abduction of the hostages.

On 29 November 1997, specific reports were received regarding the whereabouts of the hostages in Dushanbe. One of the hostages, the TACIS employee Mr. Franck Janier-Dubry, was freed that evening during the first phase of the operation. The criminals and the other hostage, Ms. Karine Danielle Mane, remained holed up in a house surrounded by law-enforcement officers. Intensive negotiations were held with the terrorists on conditions for her release. The criminals demanded the release from custody of Bakhrom Sadirov, the brother of Rizvon Sadirov. Towards the morning of 30 November they changed their demands and presented a new ultimatum - the release of one of the leaders of the United Tajik Opposition. Further negotiations failed to yield positive results. The situation was rapidly deteriorating and the negotiations had practically reached a standstill.

Against this background, a decision was made in conjunction with representatives of the French Embassy to fire warning shots as a means of exerting psychological pressure on the terrorists. This measure also failed to produce the expected result. The terrorists emerged from the house with their hostage, threw two grenades at the law-enforcement officers, and blew themselves up with a third. As a result, Ms. Karine Danielle Mane was seriously wounded by grenade fragment. First aid was administered and she was immediately transported to the nearest hospital, where she died shortly afterwards from the injuries she had sustained.

The President and Government of Tajikistan deeply regret the tragic death of the French citizen Ms. Karine Danielle Mane and convey their sincere condolences to her family.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan, on behalf of and on the instructions of the Government, declares that every possible step will be taken to prevent similar terrorist acts in the future and assures Tajiks and all foreign citizens in our country that the Republic possesses adequate forces to resist terrorist bands and groupings with the full force of the law and to direct all its efforts towards the complete eradication of terrorism in Tajikistan.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan once again appeals to employees of diplomatic missions and international organizations in Tajikistan to stay calm and continue working normally. The Republic's leadership is currently taking every possible step to ensure the safety of foreign citizens in Tajikistan.

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